



Many Voices Working for the Community

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Spencer Gross, 241-4584

Oak Ridge Resident to Present Paper at American Nuclear Society Conference

Oak Ridge resident Ben Adams will present a paper at the American Nuclear Society Decontamination, Decommissioning and Reutilization Conference in Denver, Colo., on August 9. The conference is an international gathering of experts who work in the cleanup and closure of contaminated land and buildings, waste management, and long-term stewardship of contaminated areas. The 2005 conference will focus knowledge gained from closures of contaminated sites by private businesses and government agencies.



Al Brooks, left, and Ben Adams look over the presentation materials Adams will use at the American Nuclear Society's Decontamination, Decommissioning and Reutilization Conference in Denver. Adams will present a paper he and Brooks co-authored entitled "Two Counties – One City: Long-term Stewardship Information for Anderson and Roane Counties, and the City of Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The conference is an international gathering of experts interested in the long-term stewardship of contaminated land.

Adams is presenting the paper on behalf of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB), a volunteer citizens group that offers advice and makes recommendation to DOE on its environmental management program and cleanup operations on the Oak Ridge Reservation. Also attending the conference will be ORSSAB member Donna Campbell, who is the vice-chair of the Board's Stewardship Committee.

The paper is entitled "Two Counties – One City: Long-term Stewardship Information for Anderson County, Roane County, and the City of Oak Ridge, Tennessee." It was co-authored by Adams and Al Brooks, a retired long-time employee at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) and a member of the ORSSAB Stewardship Committee.

The paper outlines a recommendation ORSSAB has submitted to the Department of Energy - Oak Ridge Operations (DOE) to standardize language in documents submitted to county land records when contaminated waste sites are closed or transferred from DOE ownership. Consistent terms would help ensure accurate and complete retrieval of information on land parcels containing contamination.

“We must be sure that generations to come will be able to determine if a certain parcel of land contains contamination,” said Adams. “This recommendation will help protect human health and safety long after we’re gone.”

Information on land records is provided regularly by Anderson and Roane Counties to the City of Oak Ridge and to the Tennessee State Parcel Mapping System. Use of consistent terms in filing land notices by DOE would follow information to the city and state. Anyone searching city land records or the state mapping system would find notices of contamination in those records.

“What better place to store information about land containing contamination than in public land records?” said Brooks. “Land records are permanent and will always be available even if someday DOE no longer exists.”

Much hazardous waste has been generated on the Oak Ridge Reservation, beginning with the Manhattan Project in the 1940s and continuing with current research and national defense activities. DOE’s Environmental Management Program is working to clean up waste sites and contaminated areas on the reservation. However, some contamination will be left in place with controls to protect people and the environment.

Whenever DOE closes a waste site it files a notice of contamination with the appropriate county register of deeds. The recommendation Adams will be discussing in Denver simply proposes DOE use the same language on every notice of contamination. For instance, the owner of the property could be listed as the Department of Energy, United States of America – Department of Energy, or some other combination. The recommendation suggests using consistent terms in all filings.

Adams is a registered professional engineer, landscape architect, and land surveyor with 45 years of practice in design sciences. He is employed by ACHW, Inc., and holds a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering. He is a member of the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce and the Oak Ridge Breakfast Rotary Club and is on the board of the East Tennessee Economic Council. He has been a member of ORSSAB since 2002 and currently serves as the chair of the Board’s Stewardship Committee.

Brooks was involved with the Manhattan Project in its early days in barrier development at Columbia University. He came to Oak Ridge in 1945 and worked a year at the Y-12 plant. The next 10 years he worked for the University of Chicago, Standard Oil of Indiana, and the Upjohn Company as a chemist. He returned to Oak Ridge in 1956 and worked at the former K-25 plant and Oak Ridge National Laboratory. In 1985, he started his own computer information and software company, Information Interchange, which he operated for 10 years. He serves on the Stewardship Committee of the ORSSAB.

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